1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

aboriginal peoples are called by the Spanish word "Racionales" which is the equivalent of "civilizado," civilized. It was only after they came to the conclusion that I was a Pumah also, and quite different from the Racionales, that they accepted me and made this study possible.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Yaruros are small and dark with a strong mongoloid appearance. The faces are heavy, broad, with the eyes very often showing the mongoloid fold. The average stature of the men is about 5 feet 3 inches and of the women about 4 feet 10 inches. One gets the impression that the heads are larger than the ordinary in comparison with the body size. The frame is light, both men and women possessing small, beautifully shaped hands and feet. The body is relatively hairless, as is usual among pure Indian peoples. They have strong teeth and seem to keep them until a very old age.

The Yaruros have had some contact with Europeans or mixtures of Spanish, Negro, and Indians for several centuries. Herrara reached the Meta River in 1535, and subsequently missions were established along the Orinoco and its tributaries. About 1750 a mission was established at La Urbana for the Otomacos, and one was later established at Barinas. Apparently at that time these people inhabited the region between the Capanaparo and the Apure. No missions were established for the Yaruros, and, according to Gilii, the Yaruros came to the Otomaco missions to be baptized. Father Gumilla wrote:

> Here, between the Sinaruco and Meta rivers were established the colonies of Santa Barbara and of San Juan Francisco Regis at the end of 1739, having pacified the Saruro (Yaruro) nation; of which nation Father Manuel Roman, the Superior of those missions, in a letter of February 20, 1740, gives me excellent news of their good will and docility and, which is receiving our teachings anxiously; with the hope that with the good example of these first two other Reductions will be established. He adds that in the colony of San Francisco de Borja of the same nation Sarura, of which Father Francisco de Olmo is in charge, who has reduced their language to writing and a dictionary, Christianity is flourishing; and that already schools for writing, reading, and singing are attended by children (a short while ago they were wild); and that they sing the mass, litanies, etc., in a fair way. So much does careful and diligent effort accomplish in those wild regions! Father Rogue Lubian takes care of the Santa Teresa village with the same efficiency; Father Jose Maria Cervillini is in charge of San Ignacio; he, with Brother Agustin de la Vega, attend as best they can the rest of the new villages, and they are clamoring for workers with the firm hope that you will send them as soon as possible.

Since there has been contact with the white man and some Negroes for several centuries, one would expect a certain amount of race mixture. However, I never saw a sign of the slightest trace of Negro blood. The hair which, more than any other characteristic, seems to indicate Negro contact, in the case of the Yaruro is coarse and straight,

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

781 Of great importance is the fact that the Yaruros live in a world which they understand perfectly. At night they watch the heavens for signs from their gods. Each night they read a new chapter in a great story book. During the day the winds, the skies, the sun, have much to tell them, and they watch and listen eagerly. Their world is not one of fear but one which, as created by Kuma, is excessively friendly and hopeful. Terror has been introduced by the white man.

771 For every species of plant and animal life a gigantic counterpart exists in the Land of Kuma. Originally the plants and animals, which have been domesticated by the white man, were given to the Yaruros, but the size of the horse and cattle frightened the Yaruros so much that they refused to mount one or tame the other. The white man seized the opportunity which has since made him master of the Yaruro country. However, they have no explanation for the superiority of the white race except sheer wickedness. This superiority is so startling sometimes that the Yaruros feel that the white man in some way must be closely affiliated with gods, good or bad. The appearance of the white man on the plains of Apure is a legendary event. A white man, the Yaruros say, appeared on a huge horse. He was covered with foul sores and destroyed everything in his path. The Yaruros are content to hunt and cultivate the soil. The result is that the civilized peoples raise crops, store them, but the Yaruros are condemned to wander about hunting for a daily dinner.

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825 Many of the animal species, natural formations and constellations are to the Yaruros metamorphosed races of man. One explanation for the monkeys, especially the araguatos (the howlers), is that they are the descendants of a group of people who, to save themselves, climbed to the top of a tree during the time of the flood. The caymans represent another race of men who failed to take advantage of Hatchawa's rope to be lifted out of the hole in the ground. The toninos also are a race of metamorphosed humans.

182 The Yaruro, according to their conception of mankind, were
773 Kuma's chosen people. They were created first of all the Indian tribes and that is why they were given the open plains to live in with an open sky overhead so that they might be in close touch with Kuma day and night. The Guahibos, on the other hand, or as the Yaruros called them, the Tciricoi, the forest people, were created last and occupy an inferior position.

776 In addition to playing a purely religious role, the gods function
774 as ethical teachers in every shamanistic performance, a function which is shared by the spirits who are close relatives of the living Yaruros. It is they who visit their living descendants and speak through the body of the shaman, correct abuses, scold the evildoers, and praise the good.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

criticism of Kuma, and there is even an implication that she always acts with the greatest wisdom.

THE LAND OF KUMA

Kuma lives in the west, apparently beyond the horizon. In the month of March and in early April, about 9 o'clock in the evening, there is a glow in the western sky, a beautiful phenomenon, which the Yaruros explained is the reflection from Kuma's land. Its exact geographic position does not seem to be known and is as hazy as a Catholic's idea of the position of Heaven. For instance, we are told that the stars are both the lights from Kuma Land and the people from that land walking about at night, and yet the Land of Kuma is localized somewhere in the west.

This land is described sometimes as a vast and clean savanna, treeless and full of game, and at other times as a savanna with a huge town in which Kuma and her people live. This latter conception springs from the association the modern Yaruros have between wealth, comfort, power, and those material things which the civilized peoples possess. Towns are included among the products of the civilized. In the same way we find that although the Yaruros are a horseless people, Kuma and her people seem to have an abundance of horses. Apparently those things which are denied the Yaruros in this land are to be found in the next and shamanism is the means of expressing the longings of the living Yaruros.

THE LAND OF KIBEROH

In contrast with the beautiful world in which Kuma lives and to which all Yaruros expect to go, Kiberoh rules over a dark land inhabited by those unfortunate races of mankind left in the hole when the rope dropped by Hatchawa was broken by a too-heavy pregnant woman. Not much is known, nor is there much interest on the part of the Yaruros about this unpleasant region. However, this must not be taken that they have a belief in hell as Father Gumilla reported. According to this author the Yaruros believed in an evil spirit called Tighitighi. On the contrary, my informants identified Tighitighi merely as a large hawk which has no relation to the devil.

PUANÁ

Puaná stands out as the indulgent parent and teacher of Hatchawa. He is also the artisan who invented all of the implements now used by the Yaruros. He is conceived of as the great snake, and in fact is so portrayed on the gourd rattles of the shamans, yet there is a

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19
Venezuela SS1

Y 105 SS1

were accustomed to. That is, they had to fall back on a life somewhat similar to that of the Yaruros. Today one finds close to some river bank a little hut, the home of one of these Llaneros. In such a household one may find a man, his wife, and children. Their only possessions are what they can gather and make from their environment. They may have a garden in which they raise plantains and bananas, a little maize, and yucca. But the soil of the Llaneros is not fit for fertile gardens, so these people have to depend on hunting and fishing for most of their food. These are the people with whom the Yaruro have most contact. There is nothing in their houses and nothing in their mode of living to attract the Yaruro. As a matter of fact the Yaruros themselves made the comment that a Racionale's house was dirty and full of vermin and insect life, whereas they, preferring to live on the open beaches behind no shelter, had the advantage of moving about from one clean camp site to another.

Y 186

Y 177

How much the Yaruros have borrowed from Spanish lore and religious ideas it is impossible to say on a basis of our knowledge. In their religious ideas one might guess that the conception of the existence of an evil spirit and the personality of India Rosa may be the two strongest elements. All these, however, were introduced a long time ago and with the breaking off of communication with the missionaries during the past century they have become weaker and weaker. Today India Rosa is confused with Kuma. The evil spirit appears in only one or two legends and plays hardly any part in the shamanistic performances.

The tenor of the Yaruro culture is typically conservative. Their reaction to any European idea is one of suspicion and fear. For instance, they will not raise domestic animals or learn to cultivate gardens. The Yaruros had their chance, they say, when the world was created, and refused to take it. Now there is only one thing left to them: to live as their ancestors have done and to die.

Y 181

This patient acceptance of their lot is the most characteristic attitude of the Yaruros. They have abandoned all hope of maintaining themselves against the destructive forces of the world around them, and even of dying out peaceably. Their only consolation lies in their firm belief that Kuma is waiting for them in the other world. In other words, not unlike many other American aboriginal groups, they have built for themselves an indestructible heaven, and one from which foreign peoples will be excluded. There they will recapture their ancient mode of life. They will have plenty of food, clothing, horses, and the companionship of their relatives. Kuma's land is a world of bliss, an expression, really, of the living Yaruro's yearning to be allowed to hunt, fish, and live peacefully with each

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II. Notes on the Otomaco

101 From information gathered principally from Pedro Ramón
186 Camacho (10) it seems that the Otomaco or Tomaco were the

[115] [622] [756]

10. Chief and shaman of community No. 6, our best informant.

object on the part of the Yaruro of a regard completely different from that they had for the other Indians who were their neighbors (11).

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11. In addition to the neighbors already cited in a previous article (see "infra" IV List...36) names of other Indians, known, it seems, by the Yaruro, were mentioned to us by various informants in the course of our investigations. Some appear to live at present in Colombia; the Mayaredo or Mayarero, "very far to the west of Yaruro territory, there where the savanna ends," which no doubt means at the foot of the Andes; the Saliba and Taparito cya koromę more particularly on the upper Meta; and the Tiapaco, Tiarua, and Mapoyó without fixed localization. The others seem to have disappeared: the Piquero (tabę pumę in Yaruro), who "cultivated conucos and had a game with a ball" and seem to have inhabited the banks of the Orinoco on the Cinaruco side, and the Guamo, Tamanaco, Tamanachi, and Guaruro.

/10 cont./

Y 186 10 These are in fact presented as enemies or inferiors. The Otomaco, on the contrary, appear to have been friends or relatives who were superior to them. This hierarchy is apparently Y 186 773 confirmed by the Yaruro myth of the creation of men (12) where

12. See "infra" IV List...38.

the Otomaco were the first brought out of a hole in the ground by the masculine divinity Iţiai, the Yaruro arriving only in second place, followed by the other Indians and the Racionales who were the last born. Their birth took place, in addition, just after that of Iţiai but before the flood which submerged the world and only after which the Yaruro were born.

D Y 773 776 The Otomaco seem to have the same divinities and religious manifestations as the Yaruro, as comes out from the words of our informant, Pedro Ramón Camacho, reproduced word for word below.

"They knew who the Kuma (13) was and they were loved by

13. Female Yaruro divinity.

O 776 the Gods. Now in the other world whereas the dead of the other Indians inhabit an isolated village located at the edge of the Universe, on the shore of the sea and some leagues from the Kuma's village, the Otomaco live a little lower than the Kuma's village, like from here to the corridor of forest (some 200 meters), in a village perched on the /11/ mountain. They called the Kuma, Iţiai, and Puana (14) by their names.

14. Another masculine Yaruro divinity, Iţiai's brother.

O Y 775 776 They had, like us, tiyo (protecting spirits represented by stones or pottery remains) and when my spirit walks along the

/13 cont./

Y 186 Let us add, finally, to this dossier on the Otomaco and their relations with the Yaruro, that the latter seem to have considered them, despite their being of another tribe, as pume--a term also already employed for the Otomaco in the legends about the origin of the mono, araguato, and chigüíre--that is, men like themselves. "They are pume like ourselves," our old informant, Pedro Ramón Camacho, said to us. On the other hand, the old Yaruro seem to have called them aitti tabe or eitti tabe, or even the short form aitti, which in Yaruro signifies simply that they are of a different tribe, whereas the Otomaco on their part apparently called the Yaruro pume, or even pume ra, which, in Yaruro also, means good people.

O 114 361 It was Juan Esteban Bellac (27) and Pedro Ramón Camacho

Y [622] 27. Temporary chief of community No. 2.

who pointed out to us almost simultaneously the existence of a last Otomaco village called Los Caballos, the name of the place where they were supposedly created, and situated on the Río Cunaviche not far from the Venezuelan village of Cunaviche. We went there in October, 1949, but only found some small hills covered with short, green grass and occupied by several trees in the English garden manner, which rose above a river of clear water. The site and the landscape were remarkable, but the Otomaco had abandoned them a long time ago.

O 115 We did find, however, one survivor of Los Caballos, Catalina Galinda, in the village of Cunaviche (in the Jacintero quarter, located a bit upstream), but we could /14/ draw nothing out of her. She no longer had any remembrance of O [191] the language or culture of her former tribe, having left Los Caballos very young and at a time when the last Otomaco were already speaking Spanish among themselves.